

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 09478 091320Z

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 COME-00 CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9558

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BEIRUT 9478

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: ECRE US LE BTRA

SUBJ: INVITATION TO HEAD OF NEW YORK PORT AUTHORITY

1. MR ELIE CHAYA, PRESIDENT OF LEBANON'S MAJOR PROJECTS OFFICE, WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SEVERAL HUNDRED MILLION POUNDS OF CONSTRUCTION WORK ANNUALLY, HAS APPROACHED THE EMBASSY ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF INVITING THE PRESENT HEAD OR A FORMER HEAD OF THE NEW YORK PORT AUTHORITY FOR A TEN-DAY TRIP TO LEBANON, WITH ALL EXPENSES PAID BY GOL. DURING VISIT PERSON IN QUESTION WOULD DEVOTE TIME TO AN OVERALL LOOK AT THE MAJOR PROJECTS OFFICE, WITH A VIEW TO MAKING SOME GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON WHAT STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO REORGANIZE THIS OFFICE ON A MORE EFFICIENT BASIS.

2. CHAYA WAS APPOINTED TO HIS PRESENT JOB ONLY A FEW MONTHS AGO AND IS QUITE CLOSE TO PRESIDENT FRANGIE. HE IS GENUINELY INTERESTED IN MAKING HIS OPERATION MORE EFFECTIVE AND HAS GUARDED GREAT ADMIRATION FOR THE NEW YORK PORT AUTHORITY, WHICH HE ONCE VISITED. HE ALSO DESIRES TO BALANCE ADVICE FROM A COMPETENT U S SOURCE AGAINST ADVICE ALREADY RECEIVED FROM FRENCH SOURCES. (THE FRENCH IMMEDIATELY RESPONDED TO A SIMILAR REQ A SHORT TIME AGO BY SENNING A MISSION OF SIX HIGH-LEVEL ENGINEERS AND TECHNICIANS AT NO COST TO GOL.)

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3. PURPOSE OF VISIT, IT SHOULD BE STRESSED, WOULD NOT BE

TO DEVELOP A PLAN OF REORGANIZATION BUT TO POINT THE WAY
TO WHAT MUST BE DONE TO ACCOMPLISH THIS. APART FROM THE
GOOD WILL GENERATED BY BEING OF ASSISTANCE, WE BELIVE THAT,
JUST AS AN OFFICE ORGANIZED ALONG FRENCH CONCEPTS OF
MANAGEMENT SEEMS TO FAVOR FRENCH FIRMS, THE INTRODUCTION
OF SOME AMERICAN MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS MIGHT HELP U S FIRMS
IN OBTAINING CONTRACT AWARDS. ACCORDINGLY, WE BELIEVE IT
WOULD BE IN OUR INTEREST TO RESPOND FAVORABLY TO THIS
REQ IF POSSIBLE.
GODLEY

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